

# Leave It To Beaver - Pilot Episode

**It's A Small World** - Aired April 23, 1957

The pilot (originally proposed as *Wally and The Beaver*) was first televised on the syndicated anthology series, *Studio 57*, without a laugh track nor the series' well known theme song, "The Toy Parade". It never aired as an episode within the series.

*It's A Small World* was filmed with a single camera, in full screen black-and-white at Republic Studios and the Universal Studios backlot. Joe Connelly and Bob Mosher wrote the teleplay with Jerry Hopper directing the episode. Richard Lewis was the producer.

After the series was picked up by CBS, Hugh Beaumont replaced Casey Adams as Ward Cleaver while the role of Wally went to Tony Dow after Sullivan experienced a growth spurt before the series' production.

**Jerry Mathers** - won his role as the Beaver by admitting he'd rather be at his Cub Scout meeting than auditioning for the show. The producers chose him because they wanted a boy with a "real boy" attitude.

Mathers appeared in the 1952 episode of *The Adventures Of Ozzie and Harriet* titled *Halloween Party*. He toured with his TV brother, Tony Dow, in the 1980s stage productions of *Boeing*, *Boeing* and *So Long, Stanley*. Jerry Mathers credits Barbara Billingsley as his favorite acting mentor and best friend.

**Barbara Billingsley** - Auditioned for the role of Danny Thomas's second wife on *The Danny Thomas Show* (1953). Marjorie Lord would be selected for that part.

According to Billingsley, "Roy [her husband] died on a Saturday, while we were gardening. The Thursday before, I was up for the part of the mother in a series Joe Connelly and Bob Mosher were working on. Then Roy died and nothing came of that series. But two months later, when they started on *Leave It to Beaver* (1957), they remembered me and asked me to read for the part of June. I've always thought that they felt sorry for me."

The pearls she always wore actually were her idea. She had a noticeable surgical scar on her neck and wore a strand of pearls to conceal it from the cameras.

**Casey Adams** (aka Max Showalter) acted in 92 shows at the Pasadena Playhouse between 1935 and 1938. He appeared on stage in the role of Horace Vandergelder in *Hello, Dolly!* more than 3,000 times opposite Carol Channing, Betty Grable, Ginger Rogers and Betsy Palmer. Showalter was a composer, a songwriter and pianist. *The Loretta Young Show*, *The Andy Griffith Show*, *The Twilight Zone* and *The Many Loves Of Dobie Gillis* are just some of his television credits.

**Paul Sullivan** - had a very brief television career. *Father Knows Best*, *Bachelor Father* and *The Donna Reed Show* were a few of his television credits from 1957 to 1962. In his role as Wally Cleaver in the pilot episode of *Leave It To Beaver (It's A Small World)*, Sullivan grew to be too tall to continue in the part by the time the series was ready to begin.

**Diane Brewster** - played "Helen Kimble", the murdered wife of Dr. Richard Kimble (David Janssen) in the TV series, *The Fugitive* (1963). She appeared in two episodes: *The Fugitive: The Girl from Little Egypt* (1963) and *The Fugitive: The Judgment: Part II* (1967).

She was Beaver Cleaver's first teacher in *Leave It To Beaver*. She returned as Miss Canfield in five episodes of *The New Leave It To Beaver* from 1983 to 1988.

**Harry Shearer** - made his film debut was with Bud Abbott and Lou Costello in *Abbott and Costello Go To Mars* in 1953. Since 1989, he has done numerous character voices including Ned Flanders and Mr. Burns in over 700 episodes of *The Simpsons*. Shearer was also a regular cast member on *Saturday Night Live*.

**Tommy Randall** - had one other television credit besides this one in 1956.

**Richard Deacon** - was typecast as a humorless or foul-tempered authority figure. In addition to his role as Fred Rutherford in *Leave It To Beaver*, Deacon was memorable as the verbally abused Mel Cooley in *The Dick Van Dyke Show*. Deacon also co-starred on the television sitcom *The Mothers-in-Law* (1967) with Kaye Ballard and Eve Arden. He also appeared in the long-running Broadway production of *Hello Dolly* as Horace Vandergelder, opposite Phyllis Diller in the 1969-1970 season.

**Joseph Kearns** - Prior to becoming a well known Old Time Radio actor, he had a career as a theatrical and Old Time Radio pipe organist. Kearns is best remembered for portraying Professor Moriarty to Basil Rathbone's *Sherlock Holmes* in Old Time Radio. He was known as the original Mr. Wilson in the first *Dennis the Menace* (1959) television series. Kearns also had recurring roles on *The Adventures Of Ozzie and Harriet*, *The Jack Benny Program*, *Our Miss Brooks* and *How To Marry A Millionaire*.

## REFERENCES

Wikipedia  
Internet Movie Data Base  
Television Academy Interviews

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## The Joey Bishop Show - Pilot Episode

**The Joey Bishop Show** (pilot) - aired on Monday evening, March 27, 1961 at 9:00PM on CBS in an episode titled *Everything Happens To Me* Of *Make Room For Daddy* (The Danny Thomas Show).

Filmed at Desilu Studios - 846 N. Cahuenga Blvd., Hollywood, California.

This served as the pilot for *The Joey Bishop Show* (1961). It is considered a spin-off. In the regular series, Joey Mason became Joey Barnes. Abby Dalton co-starred as his wife Ellie. Madge Blake and Marlo Thomas did return periodically as Joey's mother and sister respectively. Joe Besser, Corbett Monica, Guy Marks and Mary Treen were supporting cast members as well in the series. Joe Flynn made eight appearances on *The Joey Bishop Show* but in a different role than he played in the pilot episode.

Seasons 1 (Wednesday evenings) Seasons 2 and 3 (Saturday evenings) were broadcast on NBC from 1961 through 1964. The fourth and final season was broadcast Sunday evenings on CBS from 1964 to 1965.

**Danny Thomas** - was born Amos Jacobs. His stage name Danny Thomas came from the first names of his two brothers. He founded St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. Thomas was introduced to audiences on network radio in the 1940s playing the brother-in-law Amos in *The Bickersons*. He also performed as Jerry Dingle the postman on Fanny Brice's *The Baby Snooks Show*. He was offered the lead role in *The Jolson Story* (1946) after James Cagney turned it down. Thomas also turned it down. Though he was a spokesman for Sanka decaffeinated coffee, he later confessed that he never drank it. He claimed he could drink cup after cup of Maxwell House coffee and still fall asleep minutes later. He was considered for the role of Don Vito Corleone in *The Godfather* (1972) before Marlon Brando was cast.

**Joey Bishop** - was born Joseph Abraham Gottlieb. Joey weighed just two pounds and 14 ounces when he was born. "I told Buddy Hackett what I weighed and he asked, 'Did you live?'" Joey Bishop began his career as part of a stand-up comedy act with his

elder brother, Maury. He was a member of the "Rat Pack" with Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, Sammy Davis Jr. and Peter Lawford. Bishop guest-hosted *The Tonight Show* substituting for Jack Paar and then guest-hosted *The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson* at least 175 times in the 1960s. Bishop later hosted his own 90-minute late-night talk show titled *The Joey Bishop Show* on ABC beginning April 17, 1967 and ran until December 26, 1969. His sidekick was Regis Philbin.

**Joe Flynn** - will always be remembered as Captain Wallace 'Leadbottom' Binghamton on *McHale's Navy* (1962). His role on *The Joey Bishop Show* ended after the first season by Bishop because he stole too many scenes. By then, he had developed a reputation as a reliable comic foil. After *McHale's Navy*, Flynn appeared in ten films for Walt Disney Productions. He was also in the cast of Alfred Hitchcock's *Rear Window* (1954), but his scene was ultimately cut out of the film.

**Billy Gilbert** - was the model for and voice of Sneezy in *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (1937). His confrontation with Laurel & Hardy in *The Music Box* is one of his most memorable appearances in films. By his own account, he was working on stage in Louisville one night, when his straight man was taken ill. He pressed into service the Theatre Manager to substitute. That manager turned out to be Bud Abbott.

**Madge Blake** - was very popular on televisions in the 1950's appearing on numerous programs such as *The Jack Benny Program*, *The Ray Milland Show*, *December Bride*, *Leave It To Beaver*, *The Adventures Of Ozzie and Harriet* and *The Real*

McCoy's. She made numerous appearances on *Batman* with Adam West as Mrs. Cooper and Aunt Harriet from 1966 to 1967.

**Marlo Thomas** - While starring in her own television show *That Girl*, her sister Terre Thomas, her brother Tony Thomas and her father Danny Thomas all appeared on the episode, *My Sister's Keeper* (1969). She has received four Emmys, a Golden Globe and the George Foster Peabody Award for her work in television. She has also been inducted into the Broadcasting and Cable Hall of Fame.

**Richard Deacon** - Just six months after this show aired, he would make his debut as Mel Cooley on *The Dick Van Dyke Show*. This was the first of 82 episodes in this role. Deacon was a gourmet chef and in the 1970s and 1980s, he wrote a series of cookbooks as well as hosting a Canadian television series on microwave oven cooking.

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## REFERENCES

Wikipedia

Internet Movie Data Base